

Federation of Crown Green Bowls

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Press Release 1610.

31 July 2016.

Federation Focus - July.

Following the results of the July fixtures in the National League teams in all Divisions must await the final phase of matches in August to be sure of their status for next Season and for eight of the teams their place in the Team Champion of Champions beckons.

In **Division One** Middleton head the table but only by four points with Halifax & District and reigning champions, Leeds, sharing second place after both won their July fixtures. Middleton however having completed all their fixtures and must anticipate being overtaken by the two second placed teams and also by Airedale and Wharfedale who lie a further eight points adrift. Halifax beat Middleton 20 – 12 (432 – 404) in their July match having nine winners, including the last six jacks, in their home leg at Hove Edge WM in Brighouse and five in their away leg at Ashton C&BC in Ashton under Lyne. At Hove Edge Gordon Bradford (Greetland) was the best winner for Halifax (21 – 9) and Dave Dance (Tonge) the leading visiting player with his 21 – 10 result. In Ashton under Lyne father and son Tony and Kieren Bannister (both Mytholmroyd BC) starred for Halifax, 21 – 9 and 21 – 12 respectively, whilst tops for Middleton were the two Springbank players Paul Heap and Jim Hynes who both won to ten. Meanwhile in Tadcaster the Leeds home team mustered seven winners against Airedale with Mark Taylor (Crossgates) their top scorer with 21 – 8 whilst for the visitors James Teale (Rufford) won to four. Over at Rufford, up near Leeds/Bradford airport, the Airedale home team also had seven winners with Joe Stockdale (Guiseley) at number one jack restricting his opponent to five chalks and Mark Hughes (Crossgates) best for Leeds winning to twelve. Both teams won their home aggregate and the overall four aggregate points went to Leeds in a close run thing (411 – 409). In the final fixtures Leeds play Fylde “A” and Halifax play Airedale & Wharfedale.

Barnsley must be strong favourites to win promotion from **Division Two** when they meet Bury in the final match of the season with Nuneaton and Rochdale both having completed their fixtures. In the only match in this Division in July Bury went down 13 – 19 (417 – 445) to Nuneaton to take the Midlands side to the top of the table but with only a slender lead of two points. At Elton Liberals the Bury home team shared individual wins with Nuneaton and won the aggregate two points with Dave Wright (Dobbies) top scoring for them with his 21 – 12 result whilst Harry Chapman (Atherstone Grove) and Matt Allen (Phoenix) both won to ten for Nuneaton. At Bedworth BC the Nuneaton home team claimed seven winners with Richard Smart (BBC) winning to nine and Lee Bleakley (Clarence Mixed) Bury’s best winner (21 – 13).

Bury will no doubt fancy their own chances of beating Barnsley with the gap between the two ten points a win by 22 – 10 would do it for Bury with a couple of points to spare.

In **Division Three** the top of the table clash between Colne Valley and Wallasey went the way of the Huddersfield based team with their 22 – 10 result which took them nine points clear of their Merseyside rivals. In their home leg at Crosland Moor the Colne Valley team notched nine winners with Nathan Haigh (Meltham) conceding only four chalks to be home top scorer whilst Colin Saville (New Brighton Kings Royal) for Wallasey won to five. Over at West Kirby Victoria the two teams

shared individual winners and also the aggregate points with Ian Hazlehurst (NB Queens Royal) best for Wallasey with 21 - 10 and Adam Douglas (Canalside) tops for the visitors with his 21 – 8 result. The other match in this Division matched Mid-Cheshire and Ormskirk and the Cheshire home team pulled off a maximum by winning all twelve individual games in their home leg at Rudheath Private with local player Dave Stanley winning to five and Andy Howie (Burscough RBL) best for the visitors with his twenty. Over at Burscough C&B the Ormskirk home team had seven winners and took the home aggregate two points with Liam Gregson (Railway Rebels) winning to five whilst for Mid-Cheshire Jan Wakefield (Red Lion) and Stuart Greenhalgh (Shavington SC) shared the honours with their 21 – 13 results. Final result Mid-Cheshire 23 Ormskirk 9 (448 – 378). The August fixtures match Colne Valley and Ormskirk with Wallasey playing Furness.

“Congratulations to Wallasey player Matt Gilmore who won the All England Merit.”

North Yorkshire lead **Division Four** by sixteen points after sitting out the July matches with their bye and are due to meet their closest challengers, South Lancashire, in August. South Lancashire had a comfortable win over their County rivals East Lancashire in July winning all but one of the games in their home leg at Leigh BC and sharing the individual wins away at East Lancashire Cricket Club for a 21 – 11 (449 – 402) result. In Leigh the home team's best winner was local player Alan Hill (21 – 3) whilst for the visitors Lee Longland (Two Gates) was their only winner (21 – 17). Over in Blackburn local player, Paul Sutcliffe, was the best of the home team's six winners (21 – 3) and three players shared top spot for the visitors all winning 21 – 16, Paul Garnett (Botanical), John Pratt (Leigh RU) and Tony Hodgetts (Westleigh). The other match in this Division saw Leeds “B” take all of the eight aggregate points to complete a fine win 20 – 12 (437 – 412) over South Lakes although the individual wins were equally shared twelve to each team. At Rothwell BC in Leeds three players shared the honours for the home team, local Gary Dennison, Mark Hopps (Crossgates Rec) and Neil Wood (Jnr) from Chapel Street all winning to eight whilst Barry Robinson (Carnforth) was best for the visitors with his 21 – 10 result. Meanwhile up in Cumbria Alan Salke (Bowling Green) won to ten for the home team and Mark Lufford (Crossgates Rec.) for Leeds restricted his opponent to eleven. August matches – North Yorkshire v South Lancashire and East Lancashire v Leeds “B”.

Two of the Federation's new teams for 2016 top the table in **Division Five** with Dudley top with a sixteen point lead but Dudley have completed their fixtures and Liverpool /St. Helens need to pick up just seventeen points in their forthcoming match to win the Division. In the July fixtures Dudley needed a big win if they were to challenge for the title and they produced just that beating Mon Menai 23 – 9 (458 – 368). In their home leg at The George at Warley Dudley had nine winners, three to single figures of which the best was local Marc Wilson with 21 – 5 and John Short (Bangor City) was tops for Menai with 21 – 18. Dudley's away team in Caernavon shared the individual winners with Mon Menai and clinched the away aggregate points by seven chinks. Starring for Dudley was Wayne Berry (Cradley Heath Liberals) with a 21 – 5 result whilst best for the home team was Dave P Williams (Bangor City with 21 – 9. All the eight aggregate points went to Dudley. The local derby match, Liverpool/St. Helens v Southport, was the other fixture in this Division and it was the Merseyside team which were in almost complete charge winning 26 – 6 (466 – 332). In their home leg at Mossley Hill BC the Liverpool/St. Helens team had ten winners, of which five were to single figures the best of which being Rob Jones (Grant BC) with 21 – 5 whilst two of the visitors won to nineteen, Brian Coleman (Fleetwood Hesketh) and Chris Thompson (Croston Subs.). Away at Fleetwood Hesketh the visitors had eight winners to Southport's four with George Curran (Gardeners Arms) winning to eight and best for the home team was local Jason Wright (21 – 7). August fixtures Liverpool/St. Helens play Airedale & Wharfedale “B” and Southport meet Mon Menai.

The two regional Divisions, **Division Six (North West)** and **Division Six (Midlands & Yorkshire)**, have completed their fixtures and the top two teams in each move forward to playoffs which will allow

the winners to qualify for the Team Champion of Champions in September. In the July matches Bolton moved to the top of the North West Division by just four points from Fylde "B" when they comfortably beat Rochdale Ladies 25 – 7 (473 – 386). At the Kings Head in Bolton the home team had ten winners with Stuart Unsworth (Hill Tops) giving them a great start at number one jack, conceding one single chalk, whilst for Rochdale Barbara Coles was the best of their two winners (21 – 18). Over in Rochdale at New Street the ladies had five winners including Margaret Taylor (Beursil) with her single figure result (21 – 7) with Peter Howard (Edgeworth) best for Bolton (21 – 8). The two matches in the Midlands & Yorkshire Division saw an almost unbelievable result in one of them. In the match between Burton and Doncaster both teams had twelve individual winners, both won their away aggregate two points and they then shared the overall aggregate four points. Final Result Burton 16 (428) Doncaster 16 (428), the ultimate drawn match. In Burton's home game at Alrewas RBL Graham Earp top scored for the home team with 21 – 15 and Richard Curtis (Tickhill) for Doncaster had the only single figure result of the leg 21 – 8. In Doncaster at Pilkington Recreation Robert Hocking (Wickersley Village) top scored for the home team and Reece Cookson (Stretton Anglesey) was the sole single winner (21 – 8) of that leg for the visitors. The other match in this Division brought another win for Bradford who have dominated all their opponents throughout the Season. The 23 – 9 (440 – 371) result against UK Police took Bradford to a total of 74 points from their three matches. In their home leg at Spen Victoria in Gomersal the Bradford team had eight winners, three to single figures, with Andy Southwell (Asa Briggs) top scoring with 21 – 2 and Kevin Burns (West Yorkshire) best for the Police with 21 - 4. The Police chose Washlands Sports in Burton on Trent as their home venue and had five winners with Paul Bradley (Derbyshire) their top scoring player with a 21 9 result whilst Neil Tordoff (Wyke) was the best for Bradford with his 21 – 5. In the playoffs in August Bradford will play Fylde "B" and Bolton will meet UK Police.

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